



**M E D I A   R E L E A S E**  
STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
FEBRUARY 11, 2008

CONTACT:      TAMMY HEISE  
(615) 532-0929

**DEVIL'S BACKBONE HIKE SLATED FOR FEBRUARY 16**

**Nashville, Tenn.** - The Department of Environment and Conservation's Division of Natural Areas will host a guided hike at Devil's Backbone State Natural Area in Lewis County near Hohenwald on Feb. 16. Participants should meet at 10 a.m. at the natural area's parking lot near mile marker 394 on Natchez Trace Parkway, approximately three miles north of Highway 412.

Stewardship Ecologists Brian Bowen and Allan Trently will take hikers on a three-mile loop through the Devil's Backbone State Natural Area. This easy to moderate trail follows the steep, dry ridges of the Highland Rim and descends into a hollow before returning to the ridge. Devil's Backbone is a high quality Western Highland Rim forest community, with fine examples of oak, hickory, beech, tuliptree and other species found within its boundaries.

"The integrity of this forest is impressive," Bowen said. "This area has much less exotic pest plant invasion than most other sites in the region. Devil's Backbone is a real treasure - almost untouched by human activity and intervention."

Participants should bring water and snacks, and they should wear appropriate footwear and dress in layers. Reservations are required for the guided hike and can be made by contacting Brian Bowen by phone at (615) 532-0431 or by e-mail at [brian.bowen@state.tn.us](mailto:brian.bowen@state.tn.us) by Feb. 14. The hike will be cancelled in the event of rain or if rain is predicted.

Devil's Backbone State Natural Area is a 950-acre mixed hardwood forest located on the Western Highland Rim. Few high-quality examples of this type of forest community are known to exist because of present and past land use patterns. Devil's Backbone also is an outstanding scenic recreation area, offering exceptional views of the ridge and the rare forest community it supports.

The hike at Devil's Backbone is part of a series of monthly, guided field trips to Tennessee State Natural Areas offered by the department's Division of Natural Areas. Tennessee has 77 designated State Natural Areas throughout the state, covering approximately 110,000 acres of ecologically significant lands. More information about Tennessee's natural areas program, including a complete list of all natural areas and scheduled field trips, can be found at <http://state.tn.us/environment/na/>.

###